

is a very poor part of our hemisphere—but also from many other countries, including Mexico, including people from Romania, from Yemen. I am just looking here—from Ecuador, from Colombia, from countries all over Latin America. So it is a big problem.

Again, there are billions of people in the world who unfortunately don't have the kind of lifestyle that we have in this country and aspire to it. So you have to have an immigration system of some kind.

Second, I would make the point that the administration is talking about spending \$4 billion in Central America. I suppose that is over the next few years. It should be noted that we just spent \$3.6 billion on economic development in those same countries over the past 5 years.

So I am for that. I think we should be helping these countries develop. I was for a trade agreement with these countries to try to encourage their economic development.

I am for helping to deal with the corruption and dealing with the kind of lack of transparency and lack of opportunity in these countries. That is all good. The judicial system and the rule of law need to be strengthened—no question about it. I am for doing that.

These countries are in our hemisphere. They should be treated, in my view, differently than even countries elsewhere in the world because they are close to us. They are our neighbors, essentially. But that is not going to solve the problem—certainly, not during my lifetime. It will take decades, and it doesn't mean we shouldn't do it. And we have been doing it. Some \$3.6 billion of hard-earned taxpayer money has gone toward this in the last 5 years.

But I don't think it is honest to tell the American people: If we just spend a little more money in Central America, this problem will be solved.

Wouldn't that be nice, if we could wave a magic wand and it could be solved and suddenly those countries would be prosperous and free?

It is going to take a long time. It doesn't mean that we shouldn't be doing it, but in the meantime we have to come up with a system that is lawful, that is orderly, that is humane, and that deals with this problem. And by putting our heads in the sand or blaming the previous administration—again, here is their record—that is not going to solve the problem. In fact, it is going to create an impression that the problem is easy to solve, which it is not. It is a difficult problem—no question about it. And broader immigration reform is something that is needed—no question about that.

But, in the meantime, let's focus on the border. Let's do these simple things. Let's support the Border Patrol. Let's be sure that they have what they need in terms of technology. Let's be sure that we are doing all we can to have asylees apply in their country, or, if not, in a third country. If they come

to our border, let's adjudicate those claims at the border, because then the next group will say: Well, I am not going to get to come into the United States and wait for 4 or 5 years and get embedded in the community. I am going to have to have my case decided at the border.

It is much more likely that those traffickers, those smugglers who are exploiting these people are not going to be able to say—again, with some credibility right now: Hey, you come with me. You pay me a lot of money. I will take you not just to the border, but you will get into America, and you will be able to have a life there because you won't be deported.

That is what they can say now. We want them instead to be saying: Well you are going to have to have your case adjudicated at the border, and you may be qualified.

Again, 15 percent have made it through, and those are people who should be taken care of, in my view, as asylees. But for those other individuals, they will know that it is much better to apply legally, to go through the system, and to have the opportunity to go through an orderly, legal process.

So I hope that the administration makes some of these changes quickly because I don't see this situation getting any better. In fact, in May it got worse, despite everyone saying from DHS, with whom I spoke: Don't worry. Things are getting better.

I don't see that. There is a looming date—I think it is the end of July—when title 42 will no longer apply to single individuals. Right now, title 42, which I talked about earlier, which is where, because of COVID, the United States government is turning people away at the border. Right now, this is happening with regard to single individuals. When title 42 ends, which it will at the end of what is the COVID-19 public health emergency, which expires soon, then what is going to happen?

Well, I can tell you, the Border Patrol is very, very nervous about that. That is one question they ask me repeatedly: What are we going to do when we can't use title 42 and when people know that, when they come into this country, they are not likely to get deported?

That is a short-term issue we have to deal with. Congress could extend title 42 for now. We still have a COVID issue, not just in this country. Thank goodness we are getting over it, but it is a much bigger issue, unfortunately, south of the border, in all of these countries we talked about, including some of these countries in South America that are having a serious issue right now with COVID. You could continue with it, in my view, as a public health emergency. But, in any case, let's not do this—get rid of, as an example, title 42 without preparing for it. Let's be sure there is in place something else, something better to be able

to deal with the obvious surge that we have seen.

So I appreciate the fact that this is a tough issue, and I know that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would probably prefer that we not get into these difficult issues because they are hard.

I do see that the Presiding Officer has now arrived, with whom I have worked quite a bit on this issue, and we have a specific piece of legislation that helps to deal with this issue, that helps to deal with the surge.

That legislation is bipartisan. It creates a strategic plan and a contingency fund for immediate needs at the border when there is a surge to deal with the DHS issue I talked about earlier when the Border Patrol just gets overwhelmed.

That is another part of what we ought to do, is to be honest about the problem and to deal with it. It is called the Border Response Resilience Act, and it enables the Department of Homeland Security to respond to the worst immigration crisis that we have had in at least 20 years. I would hope that—again, that is a bipartisan approach—that we could at least pass that and then take the other four steps that I talked about to ensure that we have an orderly system that actually works and to be sure we can retain the sovereignty of our border, keeping the list of drugs out, like synthetic opioids and like fentanyl, that are killing so many Americans, and that we have an orderly and lawful and humane immigration system.

With that, I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, due to a family medical emergency, I was unable to attend today's votes on motion to invoke cloture and confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 148, Radhika Fox, of California, to be an Assistant